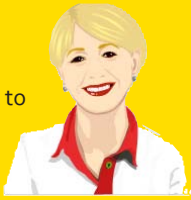




## Global impact?

**DON'T** forget to send us your feedback on what you think of



the recent demise of Sweden's Congrex - today's big story (right).

It's a major collapse which could have worldwide ramifications.

What effect is it likely to have on conference business in Australia?

Drop me a line by email and we'll run your thoughts in a future edition of **BEN**.

**ON** a lighter note, our thanks to the many people who called by the **Business Events News** stand during the office\* show in Sydney last week.

A particular highlight was meeting with two very successful and inspirational women – Donna Coulling and Susie Barron-Stubley, who were both flown to Australia by British Airways to speak at the event, to sell-out crowds of enthusiastic admirers.

Their enthusiasm and joie de vivre positively oozed out of their frightfully British pores - see our interview in an upcoming **BEN**.

**AND** Mike Smith of World Trade Travel is asking on his Facebook page, "What did I say to Jill Varley that brought this response at the Macau Food Festival, Sheraton on the Park on Friday?"



He's going to reward the best and perhaps funniest quote with a Macanese Culinary Book with 100 recipes.

*Executive PA* scribe Louis Allen has already registered a beauty – "Fancy mistaking me for a Portuguese tart!" *Jill*

## Swedish PCO goes under

**CONGREX**

Sweden, the largest professional congress organiser in Scandinavia has filed for bankruptcy.



**CONGREX**

The demise of one of the region's major organisers of congresses, conferences and meetings, is considered not just a major blow to the Swedish meetings industry but has possible implications worldwide.

Congrex had been in operation since 1982, boasting 17 offices in 12 countries and in 2012 delivered services for 364 conferences in 89 cities, across 35 countries with more than 200,000 delegates in total.

The company also handled more than 3,500 meetings annually and arranged bookings of almost 120,000 room nights.

According to an article in the Swedish newspaper *Besöksliv* Annika Benson, communications manager for Congrex Sweden said, "We have had poor profitability in recent years and it worsened during the year, so the board felt that bankruptcy was the only option."

The company, which had over 100 employees, turned over €49 million in 2010 and €57m in 2011, but sales dropped to €38 million last year.

It's just a few weeks since Congrex hosted three major medical congresses at Uppsala Concert and Congress with thousands of delegates, with the centre's cfo Michael Bleeker saying the collapse means there's a risk that they will lose some upcoming events.

### New speakers site

**CONFERENCE** Speakers Direct has this month launched a website which allows organisers to connect directly with speakers, entertainers and presenters "without any middleman or agency commission" - see [conferencespeakersdirect.com.au](http://conferencespeakersdirect.com.au).

"I assume that the administrator can quickly find more PCOs that at the same time have the opportunity to be part of a major restructuring of the Swedish market for conventions.

"But it is a clear risk that hotels and meeting facilities are losing money in the bankruptcy."

Congrex has operations in other parts of Europe, and it's only the Swedish business which has been placed into administration.

In Australia, Francis Child md of the Association Specialists said the collapse of at least one part of one of the biggest conference organisers in the world could have very serious repercussions for the whole PCO market and international events in particular.

"I would think it is highly likely some of their clients may lose considerable sums of money."

If you have an opinion or an insight into this outcome, we'd like to get your feedback on the implications - email me on [jill@businesseventsnews.com.au](mailto:jill@businesseventsnews.com.au).

### ACTE earlybird

**REGISTRATIONS** have now opened for the Association of Corporate Travel Executives upcoming ACTE Australasia Education Conference.

Taking place 05-06 Dec at the Sydney Sheraton on the Park hotel, there's an instant 30% discount for ACTE members and another 20% off for bookings made before 01 Nov meaning corporate ACTE members pay just US\$355 each.

Confirmed keynote presenters include Craig James, chief economist from Commonwealth Securities; Peter Harbison of the Centre for Aviation; and Scott Gillespie, founder of Gillespie's Guide to Travel+Procurement.

**CLICK HERE** for more info.

## Bubbles hits UKTV



**OUR** very own Champagne Jayne (albeit that she is also a Pom) who has made numerous appearances at industry trade shows and events in Australia, is about to debut on UK's most popular daytime TV show, talking about champagne, of course!

There is possibly no one more passionate about French bubbly than Jayne Powell (her real name) who believes above all in the 'Democratisation of Champagne'.

Her UK TV debut will be on ITV's 'This Morning' on 30 October when she will present her Bluffers Guide to Champagne and explode the myth that supermarket own brand bubbly is no match for the real deal.

Following her UK TV and events stint, Jayne will be back in Sydney in time for Christmas.

Who knows who might be able to bag her for a Christmas do!

## Be inspired

**IF** you want to be inspired by and learn from some of the most successful Australian business owners, then Fulworks, led by network television news host Anne Fulwork, a provider of business workshops, has a course this Wednesday 23 October offering the latest insights, challenges and solutions from five business leaders.

It's on at the Penrith Regional Gallery & The Lewers Bequest, 86 River Rd, Emu Plains, and the \$60 cost includes the event, food and beverages.

Find out more on the website [www.fulworks.com.au/events](http://www.fulworks.com.au/events).



## Turning Macanese



**WITH** the Macau Food Festival now ended at Sydney's Sheraton on the Park Hotel and the Macau Festival commencing this past weekend in Darling Harbour, accomplished chef and tutor David Wong was on a mission down under to spread the message about traditional Macanese cuisine.

The executive assistant manager at the Macau Institute of Tourism Studies (IFT) recently gave a Macau Master Class to students of the Northern Sydney Institute's Ryde Campus.

"The institute's Ryde Campus is always keen to learn more about different cuisines and the Master Class demonstration gave our students and teachers an exciting insight and firsthand experience

### New Sydney venue

**SYDNEY'S** Metropolitan Hotel on George Street in the CBD has reopened under new management after a 12 month makeover which has seen the three storey pub transformed.

New carpet, stools and tables complement red lacquered window frames and balustrades in a contemporary new look.

An original wing of the building, built in 1834, has been made into a private dining area ideal for boardroom style meetings or intimate functions.

For more information see [metropolitanhotelsydney.com.au](http://metropolitanhotelsydney.com.au).

in Macanese cuisine," said Hugh Greenough, director of campus services.

Wong, among his many other responsibilities is also in charge of food and beverage at the BIB Gourmand-recommended Michelin Guide Educational Restaurant and teaching related subjects.

His deep knowledge of Macau's culinary delights can be found in his award-winning cookbook, *The Art of Modern Portuguese Cuisine*.

### NQ marks 30 years

**TWELVE** months after splitting the second generation family business in two and selling off Events NQ (the tents, events and party hire division), NQ Exhibitions is celebrating 30 years of success in the exhibition industry.

Managing director Donna Anderson who advocates one important business rule: "keep it local", said the exhibition hire business is burgeoning alongside a busy FNQ conferences sector.

"As a business, we have always been aware of the economic impact that an event leaves.

"Whether it's sign-writing, cleaning products or fuel, find yourself great local suppliers and stay loyal to them.

"It's such a simple premise, but for thirty years we have found it an excellent philosophy."

### Eventful Uluru

**VOYAGES** Indigenous Tourism Australia has announced its major events program for 2014, on the eve of the Darwin Symphony Orchestra's performance at Uluru. The program, which kicks off in April, features Tjungu, an Indigenous Cultural Festival followed by Outback Fest, the Uluru Camel Cup, an Astronomy weekend and the Australian Outback Marathon.

"The entire Ayers Rock Resort is fully booked this weekend around the performances of the Darwin Symphony Orchestra, which we know will be a fantastic experience," said Voyages managing director Koos Klein.

"These events further add and enhance the experience of our guests who every day have the opportunity to experience not only the natural beauty and wonder of the destination but also the true cultural immersion that is offered in numerous ways throughout the Resort including our daily cultural dance performances, spear and boomerang throwing classes, daily art markets and much more," he said.

### Cypress Lakes move



**THE** Cypress Lakes Resort in the NSW Hunter Valley (**pictured**) has changed management again, today officially becoming part of the Oaks Hotels & Resorts network.

It joins a portfolio of over 40 Oaks properties in Australia, NZ, Thailand and the United Arab Emirates.

Julie Pettit has been appointed as the property's general manager, moving from her former role as assistant gm.

It's not that long since Cypress Lakes last changed hands, with Accor rebranding the property as Grand Mercure Apartments Cypress Lakes with a fanfare less than 2 years ago (**BEN** 18 May 12).

Cypress Lakes is the region's biggest conference centre, boasting an events centre with capacity for up to 620 delegates.



### IS it a ship?

Is it a horticultural exhibition hall? No, it's from Russian design firm Remistudio, and is a rendering of a hotel designed to withstand almost any natural disaster.

Described as "shell-shaped," the floating Ark Hotel, will incorporate solar panels, a rainwater collection system, vegetation, and a self-cleaning see-through exterior.

Remistudio's Alexander Remisov said: "The Ark is an attempt to answer the challenges of our time.

"Provision is made for an independent life support system. Through the transparent roof there is enough light for plants and for illuminating the inner rooms."

All the plants are chosen according to compatibility, illumination and efficiency of oxygen producing, and with the aim of creating an attractive and comfortable space.

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